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NOTES AND FRAGMENTS.

“LYNCHBURG” FOR HARRISBURG.—In the paper by Governor Roberts in the October *QUARTERLY* on the capitals of Texas, I notice he substitutes Lynchburg for Harrisburg. This was doubtless a slip of the pen, for I have never heard that the Cabinet was at any time domiciled at the former place, while its members were for nearly a month at the residence of my grandmother at Harrisburg.

ADÈLE B. LOOSCAN.

PADRE MULDOON’S TOAST.—Among the papers of Col. Guy M. Bryan is the following toast—apparently the original—offered by Padre Muldoon at a banquet given at Anahuac, January 1, 1832 :

May Plough and Harrow, Spade and Fack,
Remain the arms of Anahuac:
So that her rich and boundless plains
May yearly yield all sorts of Grains.
May all religious discord fall,
And friendship be the Creed of all.
With tolerance your Pastor views
All sects of Christians, Turks, and Jews.
I now demand three rousing cheers—
Great Austin’s health and Pioneers.

THE CAPITALS OF TEXAS.—A resolution was offered in the second congress by Thomas J. Rusk, proposing a committee of both houses to inquire into the propriety of selecting a site upon which to locate permanently a seat of government. It was adopted, and Messrs. Rusk, Burleson, and Menefee were appointed. They reported in favor of the proposition, and recommended that “five commissioners should be chosen by vote of both Houses, whose duty it shall be to select such site, and that they should receive such propositions for the sale of lands as may be made to them, and to

make conditional contracts, subject to ratification or rejection by this Congress, and that they report by the 15th of November, and in making selections they be confined to the section of country between the Trinity and Guadalupe rivers, and that they select no place over twenty miles north of the upper San Antonio road, nor south of a direct line running from the Trinity and Guadalupe crossing the Brazos at Fort Bend."

By joint vote of the houses five commissioners were selected. They were Messrs. Greer, McGehee, Burton, Sherlock, and Chriesman.¹

Upon the subsequent vote of both houses in choosing the site, Eblin's League (the adjoining league to Colonel Moore's, on which LaGrange is situated) was put in nomination, and upon the second ballot received a majority of all the votes.

It may be of some interest to know the names of the places nominated in the contest. Besides Eblin's League, there were Nashville, Bastrop, Black's Place, San Felipe de Austin, Nacogdoches, Groce's Retreat, Comanche—not the town of that name at present—and Richmond.²

President Houston vetoed this bill, so momentous to the interest of Fayette County, upon the ground that "the law fixing temporarily the seat of government" provided "that it shall be established at the town of Houston until the end of the session, 1840, which clearly required "that at least two elections must take place for members of the house of representatives, and two-thirds of the senators will be renewed previous to that time." "Many changes," he argued, "must take place in the population and condition of Texas previous to the year 1840," and the act contemplated "a larger expenditure of the public treasure than the Executive would be willing to see subtracted from the treasury at this time."³

These seemed good and sufficient reasons. What special motive the house and Senate had for pushing the question further, is not expressed in the resolutions upon the question which followed.

May 22d the veto message was received, the bill was taken up again, and the question put,

¹House Journal, Second Congress, pp. 10, 38-9, 62-3.

²House Journal, Second Congress, Adjourned Session, pp. 97-8.

³Ibid., pp. 162-3.

"Shall the bill pass, notwithstanding the reasons of the President to the contrary?"

The vote stood 14 to 12, so the bill was lost, there not being a constitutional majority.⁴

It was the opinion frequently expressed by the old settlers that that if General Burleson had not been absent, Eblin's League would have been the seat of government, but I find his name among those who voted for the passage of the bill over the veto. Voting on the nomination of a place for the capital, he did not support Eblin's League until the second ballot, giving his first vote to Bastrop. He was absent when the vote to create the county of Colon was taken, the bill for which was also vetoed by President Houston directly after; and this probably gave rise to the notion I have mentioned.

In prospect of the seat of government being located upon Eblin's League, the people of the vicinity had selected the lot first settled by Professor Decherd, within the corporate limits of La Grange, as Capitol Hill, and looked with confident expectation to the outcome.

But the veto message came, and with results entirely unlooked for by the President; for a bill was subsequently passed by a constitutional majority, locating the future capital at Austin, or rather, the bill resulted in that.

Tradition says that the southern members urged the extension of the limits fixed by the bill, hoping to defeat it by exhibiting the imprudence of the effort, but to their utter astonishment it passed, placing the capital upon the outermost verge of civilization. Whatever outcome as to the development of the country may have been expected, this must at least be regarded as rather a daring act of legislation. ;

The prosperity to Fayette that would have followed the location of the capital on Eblin's League is easily understood.

JULIA LEE SINKS.

THE NAME ALAMO.—Even the casual observer notices that the mission of the Alamo is the only one of the Texas missions which

⁴Ibid., pp. 166-8.

bears a name not associated with sacred persons or things. San Juan, Concepcion, San José, San Francisco, and the rest may have called up the reverential respect of the friars in the mere pronunciation of the names, but there was nothing in plain Alamo,—the name of a tree and in no way connected with things holy,—to excite the veneration of churchman or to awe the more than half-savage convert. Indeed, the Alamo was not the official designation of the mission, and we may be sure that the friars never applied such a non-holy name to it. To them and to the church it was the Mission San Antonio de Valero; and Alamo is, of course, only a popular name which has by some means won favor until San Antonio de Valero has been almost forgotten.

What, then, is the origin of the name Alamo? Common report in San Antonio replies that once the grounds around the mission church were covered with a growth of cottonwoods,—*álamos*,—and that the name arose from this circumstance. Certainly this seems to be a sufficient explanation.

But there is another explanation which has been suggested by certain documents in the archives of Bexar relative to the history of the Alamo, and which, if it does not point to the real origin of the name, at least brings to light an interesting coincidence. We may, perhaps, safely assume that the mission was called San Antonio de Valero as long the friars remained in charge of it; that is, until 1793, when it was secularized.¹ From 1793 to 1801, the buildings were unoccupied; in the latter year, the military force in Texas was increased by the addition of "la compañía Volante del Álamo de Parras," and this new company was quartered in the deserted mission.¹ It remained there till 1813,¹ when the Revolution caused the temporary abandonment of the mission. After the Revolution, the company returned to its old quarters, where it remained till at least late in the twenties.

In the reports of the commander of the Texas troops this company was usually referred to as the "company of the Alamo," and no doubt this was the name by which it was popularly known. Was it not an easy step, then, to attach the name of the company to the abandoned mission where it was quartered? If, indeed, the cotton-

¹Political Chief José Antonio Sancedo to Governor Gonzales, June 10, 1825.—Archives of Bexar.

wood grew on the mission grounds, this step was rendered all the more easy, and very probably the people soon forgot that the "company of the Alamo" brought its name along with it when it first came to San Antonio. We may even think of the average citizen, in the twenties, explaining to the stranger that the company of the Alamo was so called because it was quartered in the mission of that name. Explanatory traditions frequently arise in this manner.

In submitting this suggestion, I wish it emphasized that it is offered only as a possible explanation. The facts are not sufficiently conclusive to warrant positive statements. Of course, the hypothesis suggested above would be overturned by the discovery of a single instance in which the name Alamo was applied to the mission prior to 1801, the date of the arrival in San Antonio of the company of the Alamo of Parras. If such an instance should come under the observation of any reader of this note, I trust *THE QUARTERLY* will be informed.

LESTER G. BUGBEE.